

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 PANAMA 06397 142245Z

22

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 /047 W

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R 142148Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9096

UNCLAS PANAMA 6397

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: REACTION TO DEATH OF MAO TSE-TUNG

1. LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE OF DEATH OF MAO TSE-TUNG WAS EXTENSIVE, BUT NOT INORDINATE CONSIDERING ITS NEWS VALUE. COVERAGE INCLUDED ARTICLES ON MAO'S CAREER AND HIS POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR. PRESS ALSO CARRIED CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT OMAR TORRIJOS' SHORT BUT EFFUSIVE EULOGY. TORRIJOS SAID, "CHINA HAS GIVEN HUMANITY ONE OF ITS GREATEST MEN, WHOSE LEGACY WILL NOT PERISH."

2. EDITORIALS AND COLUMNS WERE UNIFORMLY LAUDATORY, CHARACTERIZING MAO AS ONE OF THE GREAT LEADERS OF THIS CENTURY AND A FIGURE OF PARAMOUNT HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE BECAUSE OF THE MANNER IN WHICH HE TRANSFORMED CHINA. "CRITICA" EDITORIAL ALSO NOTED SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP GIVEN BY CHINA TO PANAMA IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL SESSION HELD IN PANAMA IN 1973 AND SUPPORT IN PANAMA'S "BANANA WAR" AGAINST STANDARD BRANDS. "MATUTINO" IN ITS MAO EDITORIAL TIED IN PANAMA'S RECENT NON-ALIGNED EXCURSION TO SRI LANKA. IT SAID THAT THE NON-ALIGNED NATIONS MUST NOW ALSO FIGURE IN THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE WORLD TODAY. BOTH "CRITICA" AND "MATUTINO" ARE GOP-CONTROLLED. THE MORE INDEPENDENT (AND MORE CONSERVATIVE) PAPERS HAD NO EDITORIALS ON MAO.
JORDEN

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